

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 06734

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
TAGS: PGOV, PREL, LE  
SUBJ: LEBANESE MUSLIM LEADERS ON ROAD TO DAMASCUS: THIN  
SHOW OF UNITY ON CAMPS WAR AND SUPPORT FOR KARAMI

1. CONF -- ENTIRE TEXT.

2. LEBANESE MUSLIM LEADERS REPORTEDLY HAVE AGREED TO  
ATTEND AN "ISLAMIC SUMMIT" IN DAMASCUS THIS COMING  
WEEKEND. THE PRO-SYRIAN DAILY AL-SHARQ REPORTED IN  
HEADLINE STORY DECEMBER 9 THAT TOP LEBANESE RELIGIOUS AND  
POLITICAL LEADERS FROM THE SHUNNI, SHIITE, AND DRUZE  
COMMUNITIES WILL ADOPT A UNIFIED ISLAMIC POSITION ON THE  
EVENTS OF THE CAMPS WAR. AN ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM IS TO  
BE AN EXPRESSION OF SUPPORT FOR PRIME MINISTER KARAMI, WHO  
HAS BEEN UNDER PRESSURE LATELY OVER THE CAMPS WAR AND  
LEBANON'S DIFFICULT ECONOMIC SITUATION.

3. CONCURRENT WITH REPORTED AGREEMENT ON THE DAMASCUS  
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"ISLAMIC SUMMIT," ASSEMBLY SPEAKER AL-HUSSEINI ANNOUNCED  
POSTPONEMENT OF FULL PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSIONS ON CURRENT  
EVENTS. HUSSEINI'S ANNOUNCEMENT EFFECTIVELY  
SHORT-CIRCUITED THREATS BY SOME DEPUTIES TO PUSH FOR A  
VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE KARAMI GOVERNMENT.

4. COMMENT: WE SEE SYRIAN STAGING OF YET ANOTHER MEETING OF LEBANESE FIGURES IN DAMASCUS AS SERVING SEVERAL PURPOSES. THESE PROBABLY INCLUDE:

-- AMIDST MUCH CURRENT FANFARE ABOUT IRANIAN EFFORTS TO MEDIATE AN END TO CAMPS WAR FIGHTING, A REMINDER OF SYRIA'S "ISLAMIC" CREDENTIALS.

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-- PROJECTION OF SYRIAN POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO RESOLVE THE CAMPS WAR IN ORDER TO COUNTER THE PLO'S PREFERENCE FOR NON-SYRIAN, ARAB AUSPICES.

-- A REAFFIRMATION FROM DAMASCUS, ADDRESSED ESPECIALLY TO PRESIDENT GEMAYEL AND LEBANESE CHRISTIANS, THAT SYRIA WILL NOT ALLOW PRIME MINISTER KARAMI TO BE PUSHED OUT OF OFFICE.

5. ONLY CHANGES IN THESE SYRIAN MOTIVES WOULD BE SURPRISING. WE EXPECT ANY "ISLAMIC UNITY" PRODUCED IN DAMASCUS RE THE CAMPS WAR WILL BE THIN, GIVEN SUNNI AND SHIITE ANTAGONISMS AS WELL AS DIVISIONS WITHIN THE COMMUNITIES THEMSELVES. AS FOR POSSIBLE VOTES OF CONFIDENCE IN KARAMI, WE DOUBT THAT HIS FOES WOULD PUSH THAT FAR. NO ONE WISHES TO CREATE THE POLITICAL VACUUM WHICH WOULD FOLLOW THE GOVERNMENT'S FORCED COLLAPSE. END COMMENT. MCNAMARA

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## Message Attributes

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